**“My Side of the Story”**

**Adam Bagdasarian**

I was sitting at my desk in my bedroom practicing my signature when my brother came in and asked me if I wanted shoot baskets.

 “No,” I said.  So he looked over my shoulder at the signatures, went into the bathroom for a few seconds, came out, went to his own desk, unraveled an entire roll of Scotch tape and stuck it on my head.

What does Adam’s brother do to him when he does not play basketball with him?

 Naturally, I was outraged or mad.  “What did you do that for?” I asked.  It was a stupid question because I knew very well why he had done it.  He had done it for the same reason he had stuffed me in the laundry hamper and tied me to a chair with my best ties.  He had done it because he was fourteen and had the great good fortune to be blessed with a little brother he could bedevil or tease at will.

Why does his brother tease him?

 “Try to get it off,” he said.

 This I attempted to do, but he had rubbed the Scotch tape so hard into my scalp that it had become a part of my head.

 “Let me try,” he said.

 So he tried, and I yowled, and he stopped.  Then he gently pulled a piece of the Scotch tape off the side of my head, along with six or seven of my temple hairs.

How do you think Adam felt when trying to take the tape off his head?

Even at the age of nine I knew that I had been wronged. I leaped out of my chair, past my brother, in search of justice- my mom.

In those days justice looked a good deal like my mother.  It had lovely brown hair, a warm enchanting smile, and a soft, understanding voice. Mom would look at the evidence and decide who started the problem. The best part of all was that the evidence was stuck to my head.

According to the author, who is justice?

When I reached my mother’s room, I saw that the door was closed.  For a moment I hesitated, wondering if she was sleeping, but then I opened the door.“Mom!  Mom!  Skip put—”

Why do you think that Adam went into his mother’s room?

**And then I realized that I was talking to my father, not my mother.**

 I had made a big mistake. My mother was understanding and loving. She would help me. On the other hand, although my father loved me, he was much tougher and thought that little problems should be solved on their own.

What mistake did Adam make?

 I wanted to leave. I did not want to tell my father what Skip, my brother did to me. My dad was mad. He was mad that I had opened his bedroom door without knocking. He was mad that I might have woken up my mother. He was mad because I was screaming. He was mad because I did not solve the problem by myself.

At this point my brother entered the room, saw what was happening, and stood there and said nothing.

Why was Adam’s dad mad?

“Here!” my father said.  “Here’s what we do with Scotch tape!”  And with that he pulled the whole wad off my head, along with fifty or sixty of my hairs.

How does Adam’s father solve the problem?

Then my father spanked me. He spanked my for coming in his room. He spanked me for screaming. He spanked me for not solving my own problem.

Do you think Adam should have been spanked? Explain.

At this point I heard a wheeze of escaping laughter where my brother was standing, and he turned around and ran out of the room.

Why does Skip laugh?

“Are you ever going to come in here without knocking again?”

 “No, no.”

 “Ever?”

 “No.”

 “Now get out of here!”

 And I got out and heard the door slam behind me.

What lesson do you think Adam learned that day?

There was not much to do after that but sit at my desk and wonder what had happened.  I had been signing my name, Skip put Scotch tape on my head, I ran to tell Mom, found Pop, and the lights went out.

I wondered where was the justice in that?  I had burst into my mother’s room, I had entered a larger world of justice, a world where screaming, whining, mother dependence, not knocking on closed doors, and startling one’s father were serious crimes.  That part I understood.

What life lesson did Adam learn about his father?

The part I didn’t understand was the part about why my brother, who had started the whole thing by putting Scotch tape on my head, hadn’t been punished.  So, in the interest of a smaller justice, I went over to his trophy shelf, picked up one of his baseball trophies, and gradually wrested the little gold-plated athlete off its mount.

 With a little luck, my brother would want to tell Pop about it.

How does Adam take justice into his own hands?